

RESILIENCY

Resiliency is defined as the ability to bounce back from adversity. It means to return to original form. However, many times persons go through crisis and never return to an original form but live a “new normal”. Resiliency can play a big role in the quality of life after a crisis. Where does resiliency come from? Are we born with it?

According to Kenneth Ginsburg, there are seven crucial C’s of interrelated origins of resiliency. They are as follows:

Competence

Competence is the ability to know how or to handle situations effectively. It is acquired through actual experience. Students can not become competent without first developing a set of skills that allows them to trust their judgment. Ask yourself:

- Do I help my students focus on his or her strengths and build on them?
- Do I notice what my students do well or focus on their mistakes?
- When I point out a mistake am I clear and focused or just say you messed up?
- Do I help students recognize for themselves what they have going for themselves?

Confidence

True confidence, the solid belief in one’s own abilities is rooted in competence. When we support students to find their own islands of competence and build on them, they prepare students to gain confidence to try new ventures and trust their abilities to make sound choices.

- Do I see the best in my students so that they can see the best in themselves?
- Do I help them recognize what they have done well?
- Do I use praise often enough?
- Do I treat my students as incapable or as a person who is learning to navigate the world?
- Do I avoid instilling shame in my child?

Connections

It is true students with close ties to family, school, and community have a solid sense of security that produces strong values and prevents them from making destructive choices. However research shows that a deep attachment to one person can make a difference for a student.

As a teacher, do I understand the challenges my students put me through on their path toward independence maybe normal developmental phases or do I take them so personally that my relationship with my student is harmed?

- Do my students come to me for support to express difficult emotions?
- Do I help students address conflict and resolve them instead of letting them fester?
- Do I encourage my students to examine their own ethnicity, uniqueness, and diversity as individuals?

Character

Students need a fundamental sense of what is right or wrong to ensure that they are prepared to make wise choices, contribute to the world, and become stable adults. If students possess strong character, they will stick to their own values and demonstrate a caring attitude towards others. Some students never have the opportunity to develop character. What do we do with such students?

- Do I help my students understand how his behaviors affect others in good and bad ways?
- Do I allow my students to clarify their own values?
- Do I allow my students to consider right versus wrong and look beyond immediate satisfaction or selfish needs?
- Do I demonstrate the importance of community?
- Do I express how I think of others' needs when I make decisions or take actions?

Contribution

It is a very powerful lesson for students when they realize the world is a better place because they are in it. Teens who contribute to their communities will be surrounded by high instead of low expectations and condemnation that so many students endure.

- Do I teach the important value of serving others?

- Do I make it clear to my students that they can improve the world?
- Do I create opportunities for students to contribute in some specific way?
- Do I demonstrate that I am capable of making the world a better place to live?

Coping

Students who learn to cope are better prepared to overcome life's challenges. The best protection against destructive and unsafe choices is a wide repertoire of positive adaptive coping strategies.

- Do I model positive coping strategies for my students on a daily basis?
- Do I believe that just telling my student to stop the negative behaviors will do any good?
- How do I teach my students positive coping strategies?
 1. Creative Expression
 2. Importance of good nutrition and exercise
 3. Provide step by step strategies for resolving conflict, anger, and stress
 4. Making good decisions under pressure

Control

When students realize that they can control the outcomes of their decisions and actions, they are more likely to know that they have the ability to do what it takes to bounce back. On the other hand if a student feels **like everything always happens to me** tends to become passive, pessimistic, and depressed. He sees control as an external force, not a force within.

- Do I help my students understand that life's events are not purely random and most things happen as a direct result of someone's actions and choices?
- Do help my students think about the future, but take it one step at a time?
- Do I help my students recognize that small successes can experience the knowledge that he or she can succeed?

- Do I help my students that no one can control all circumstances, but everyone can shift the odds by choosing the positive or protective behaviors?

CONCLUSION

Well how are all these building blocks of resiliency interrelated? Consider the following:

Students need to experience competence to gain **confidence**. They need **connections** with an adult to reinforce those points of **competence**. They need **character** to know what they should **contribute** to their community and to the world and **character** is forged through a deep connection with another. Students who do **contribute** to their communities gain **confidence** as they feel more **competent**. All of this leads them to recognize that they can make a difference and change their environments and this gives a heightened sense of **control** to use healthy **coping** strategies because the need to deaden the senses or escape will be lessened. A key **coping** strategy is to turn to a person to whom you have strong **connections**.....